

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1.-14. (Canceled)

15. (New) An endless conveyor belt extending helically along part of its length, comprising:

transverse rods

lateral elements,

wherein the lateral elements are connected in pairs to only two rods, which are fixedly connected to said lateral elements and form, with these, a link means, and

adjoining links are articulated to each other by a coupling element which is arranged there-between and connected to neighboring rods of the adjoining links.

16. (New) A conveyor belt as claimed in claim 15, in which each of the adjoining links is articulated to the coupling element arranged therebetween, for turning about two mutually perpendicular axes which are perpendicular to the longitudinal direction of the conveyor belt.

17. (New) A conveyor belt as claimed in claim 16, in which adjoining links are, by means of said coupling elements, mutually movable in the longitudinal direction of the conveyor belt.

18. (New) A conveyor belt as claimed in claim 17, in which the coupling element is designed so that the neighboring rods of the adjoining links, in an expanded state, are arranged at a distance from each other that corresponds to the distance between the two rods of the respective links.

19. (New) A conveyor belt as claimed in claim 18, in which the lateral elements of each link overlap the lateral elements of an adjoining link in an expanded state of the conveyor belt.

20. (New) A conveyor belt as claimed in claim 19, in which each link has a front portion which is complementarily formed to a rear portion of an adjoining link to allow mutually overlapping bringing together of the links.

21. (New) A conveyor belt as claimed in claim 17, in which the lateral elements of each link overlap the lateral elements of an adjoining link in an expanded state of the conveyor belt.

22. (New) A conveyor belt as claimed in claim 21, in which each link has a front portion which is complementarily formed to a rear portion of an adjoining link to allow mutually overlapping bringing together of the links.

23. (New) A conveyor belt as claimed in claim 15, in which adjoining links are, by means of said coupling elements, mutually movable in the longitudinal direction of the conveyor belt.

24. (New) A conveyor belt as claimed in claim 23, in which the coupling element is designed so that the neighboring rods of the adjoining links, in an expanded state, are arranged at a distance from each other that corresponds to the distance between the two rods of the respective links.

25. (New) A conveyor belt as claimed in claim 23, in which the lateral elements of each link overlap the lateral elements of an adjoining link in an expanded state of the conveyor belt.

26. (New) A conveyor belt as claimed in claim 25, in which each link has a front portion which is complementarily formed to a rear portion of an adjoining link to allow mutually overlapping bringing together of the links.

27. (New) A conveyor belt as claimed in claim 25, in which the lateral elements of each link have a centrally extended shoulder to form a front portion and a rear portion of the link.

28. (New) A conveyor belt as claimed in claim 27, in which the rods of each link connect to the respective lateral elements on the associated side of said shoulder.

29. (New) A conveyor belt as claimed in claim 15, in which adjoining links are capable of being brought together without overlap, and the coupling element which connects said links to each other comprises two coupling subelements which are each arranged at a respective longitudinal lateral edge of the conveyor belt, each coupling subelement having a protruding flange which fills up a gap between the respective lateral elements of the adjoining link when being moved away from each other.

30. (New) A conveyor belt as claimed in claim 15, in which elongate holes are formed in the coupling element to receive said neighboring rods of the adjoining links.

31. (New) A conveyor belt as claimed in claim 15, in which the coupling element comprises two coupling subelements which are each arranged at a respective longitudinal lateral edge of the conveyor belt.

32. (New) A conveyor belt as claimed in claim 15, in which a first lateral element of each link forms a spacer for supporting a superposed turn of the conveyor belt when extending helically.

33. (New) A conveyor belt as claimed in claim 32, in which also a second lateral element of each link forms a spacer.

34. (New) A conveyor belt as claimed in claim 15, in which the rods of the conveyor belt support a wire mesh for forming a load-carrying surface of the conveyor belt.